

TENNESSEE REGULATORY AUTHORITY



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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BELLSOUTH PERMITTED TO CHARGE FOR DIRECTORY ASSISTANCE

NASHVILLE – A request made by BellSouth to implement a .29 charge for statewide directory assistance was approved today by a 2-1 vote.

The request and subsequent decision is in accordance with the 1995 Tennessee Telecommunications Act approved by state lawmakers that, among other things, renders directory assistance as a “non-basic service” subject to the company’s pricing freedoms.

According to BellSouth officials, though, not everybody will be affected by the new directory assistance charge. The company reports that only 10% of Tennessee customers use directory assistance for locating numbers, and that 90% of the state’s population “will see no changes in their bills.”

Today’s action mirrors a decision recently made by the TRA for United Telephone Southeast (UTSE) that also allows a charge for use of directory assistance.

Listed below are the conditions under which BellSouth is allowed to charge for DA as established by the TRA:

- 1. Six free Directory Assistance calls per month are allowed per month for residential and business subscribers; with an allowance of two (2) inquiries per DA request.**
- 2. No DA charge for calls made from residential or business telephone lines from persons who are unable to use a telephone directory due to visual or physical impairments, which can be confirmed by a physician.**

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- 3. No DA charge will be assessed to residential subscribers who are 65 years or older upon request and with satisfactory proof of age.**
- 4. No DA charge to residential subscribers that have a person 65 years or older permanently residing at the subscriber's residence.**

In addition to the conditions, for a period of 3-months after the date charging begins, BellSouth has agreed to issue a DA voice-message to allow subscribers to hang up on the service before incurring a charge.

The charge for the new service begins on Sunday, August 1. BellSouth has indicated that the charges should start appearing on customers' statements during the first billing cycle in September.

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